



NEWS RELEASE

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Janice Castle Honored As Central California Women in Business Champion of the Year Small Business Week April 9-15



Pictured: Janice Castle

Fresno, CA – The Fresno District Office of the U. S. Small Business Administration has named Janice Castle as the 2006 Central California Women in Business Champion of the Year. Champion awards are presented by SBA as part of National Small Business Week celebrated nationally, April 9-15.

Castle was selected for this prestigious award because of her outstanding advocacy efforts and commitment to support women entrepreneurship. Nominations for this award were solicited from throughout the 15-county Central California area.

Carlos G. Mendoza, District Director of the Fresno SBA Office, said, "Castle is a role model for all women owned businesses. Not only is she a tremendous asset as a mentor, but she is also a leader in our business community. We are honored to present Janice Castle with the Central California Women in Business Champion of the Year Award."

Janice Castle is Senior Vice President/Manager of the SBA Department at Bank of the Sierra. Castle said, "I genuinely appreciate the recognition, however, so many others in the community have participated with me in helping entrepreneurs and particularly women owned businesses."

Castle volunteers for numerous organizations. Prior to joining Bank of the Sierra she spent time with American National Bank and Bank of America. Castle has been involved with the Porterville Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Mount Dennison Water District, and the Porterville Emblem Club (a local women's group).

Castle was nominated for this award by Bank of the Sierra and County Supervisor, Jim Maples. Jim Holly, Bank of the Sierra President and CEO said, "Bank of the Sierra is committed to helping the small businesses in our communities grow regardless of race, religion, disability or gender. Janice and her SBA team have exemplified this commitment to our communities. This award is well deserved."

Award nominations are evaluated on the following criteria:

- Active support for legislative or regulatory action designed to help small businesses.
- Efforts to increase business and financial opportunities for women.
- Legal, financial or managerial assistance provided to enhance women's business ownership.
- Volunteer efforts to strengthen the role of women business owners within the community.
- Advocacy of the women-owned business community as a whole, not solely for individual personal advancement.
- Other accomplishments demonstrating effectiveness in improving the environment for the creation and expansion of businesses owned and operated by women.